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Agenda item 123

Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Santiago **Wins** (Uruguay)

I. Introduction

1. The previous recommendations made by the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly under agenda item 123 appear in the report of the Committee contained in document A/56/736.

2. The Fifth Committee resumed its consideration of the item at its 41st, 44th, 50th, 52nd and 53rd meetings, on 4, 6, 14, 15 and 19 March 2002. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee's consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records (A/C.5/56/SR.41, 44, 50, 52 and 53).

3. For its further consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

Estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council is seized

(a) Report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/56/25/Add.3);

(b) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/56/7/Add.8);

Special political missions

(c) Note by the Secretary-General on the utilization of the provision for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs (A/C.5/56/39);

Availability of documentation

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on the simultaneous availability of parliamentary documentation in electronic form in the six official languages on the United Nations web site (A/C.5/56/12);

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(e) Oral report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (see A/C.5/56/SR.41);

Review of public information activities

(f) Report of the Secretary-General on the review of public information activities in the United Nations Secretariat outside the Department of Public Information (A/C.5/56/17);

(g) Oral report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (see A/C.5/56/SR.41);

Documents and publications of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

(h) Note by the Secretariat on languages used for preparation of documents and publications of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (A/C.5/56/19);

(i) Oral report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (see A/C.5/56/SR.41).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.48

4. At the 52nd meeting, on 15 March, the representative of Nepal, Vice-Chairman of the Committee and coordinator of the informal consultations on this question, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council is seized" (A/C.5/56/L.48).

5. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.48 without a vote (see para. 20, draft resolution I).

6. Also at the same meeting, in the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.48, the Committee took note of the information, contained in document A/C.5/56/39, that an unallocated balance of $34,303,300 remained against the provision of $98,338,700 for special political missions for the biennium 2002-2003.

B. Draft resolutions A/C.5/56/L.47 and A/C.5/56/L.56

7. At the 50th meeting, on 14 March, the representative of Cuba, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003" (A/C.5/56/L.47), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"1. *Regrets* the implementation of the proposed measures outlined in information circular ST/IC/2002/13 as well as in the note verbale from the Secretary-General dated 28 February 2002 in relation to the service reductions to certain areas which directly affect services to be provided to Member States;

"2. *Stresses* that some of those measures are in contravention of its resolutions 56/242 and 56/254 of 24 December 2001;

"3. *Decides* that the proposed measures shall not be implemented, and requests the Secretary-General to restore the services that have been reduced, in particular in the case of conference services and permanent missions Internet support services;

"4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to present a report containing proposals on the implementation of its resolution 56/254 in a way that does not adversely affect the services provided to Member States, taking into consideration the current budgetary procedures, the PPBME rules and the financial rules and regulations, for its consideration and approval at its second resumed fifty-sixth session;

"5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in making such proposals, to ensure fair, equitable and non-selective treatment of all budgetary sections."

8. The Committee had before it a statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.47, submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (A/C.5/56/40).

9. At the 53rd meeting, on 19 March, the representative of Mexico and coordinator of the informal consultations on this question introduced, on behalf of the Chairman, a draft resolution entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003" (A/C.5/56/L.56).

10. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.56 without a vote (see para. 20, draft resolution II).

11. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division made a statement (see A/C.5/56/SR.53).

12. Following the adoption of the draft resolution, statements in explanation of position were made by the representatives of Cuba (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China) and the Syrian Arab Republic.

13. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.56, draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.47 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

C. Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.57

14. At the 53rd meeting, on 19 March, the representative of Austria and coordinator of the informal consultations on this question introduced, on behalf of the Chairman, a draft resolution entitled "Documentation availability in six languages on the United Nations web site" (A/C.5/56/L.57).

15. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.57 without a vote (see para. 20, draft resolution III).

D. Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.58

16. At the 53rd meeting, on 19 March, the representative of Austria and coordinator of the informal consultations on this question introduced, on behalf of the Chairman, a draft resolution entitled "Review of public information activities in the United Nations" (A/C.5/56/L.58).

17. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.58 without a vote (see para. 20, draft resolution IV).

E. Draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.59

18. At the 53rd meeting, on 19 March, the representative of Austria and coordinator of the informal consultations on this question introduced, on behalf of the Chairman, a draft resolution entitled "Documents and publications of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia" (A/C.5/56/L.59).

19. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/56/L.59 without a vote (see para. 20, draft resolution V).

III. Recommendations of the Fifth Committee

20. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
Estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council is seized

The General Assembly,

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General on the estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council is seized[1] and the related reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[2]

Recalling its resolution 56/255 of 24 December 2001, in which it approved a charge totalling 11,113,400 United States dollars against the provision for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003,[3]

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the estimates in respect of matters of which the Security Council is seized,[1] and concurs with the observations and endorses the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in its report;[4]

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[1] A/C.5/56/25 and Add.1-3.

[2] A/56/7/Add.5-8. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 7A*.

[3] A/56/6 (Sect. 3). For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 6*.

[4] A/56/7/Add.8, para. 24.

2. *Approves* the charge of 41,458,500 dollars, inclusive of the amount of 11,113,400 dollars approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/255 for the 19 special political missions dealt with in the reports of the Secretary-General against the provision for special political missions requested under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003;[3]

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take all necessary action to ensure that the special political missions are administered with the maximum of efficiency and economy.

Draft resolution II
Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions 56/253, 56/254 and 56/242 of 24 December 2001,

Reaffirming also the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, inter alia, rule 47,

1. *Notes with concern* the implementation of the measures outlined in the note verbale from the Secretary-General dated 28 February 2002 and in the information circular concerning budget constraints and support service reductions[5] in relation to reductions in certain areas that directly affect services provided to Member States;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to implement the aforementioned resolutions in a way that does not adversely affect the services provided to Member States, in accordance with the current budgetary procedures, the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation[6] and the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations;

3. *Stresses* the need for the Secretary-General to implement all General Assembly resolutions in a transparent and non-selective manner;

4. *Notes* the importance of appropriate provision of conference support services to the bodies and committees of the Organization and to regional groups in accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/242, and in this context requests the Secretary-General to minimize the adverse effect of any changes in the existing and established practice with respect to the provision and availability of conference servicing resulting from the implementation of the measures outlined in his note verbale dated 28 February 2002 and outlined in the information circular;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to restore immediately Internet services, including web hosting, e-mail and support services, to permanent missions, utilizing the resources released as a result of resolution 56/___ on the comprehensive study of the question of honorariums payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations, and to reflect the necessary transfers among sections of the budget in the context of the first performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, to be submitted at the fifty-seventh session;

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[5] ST/IC/2002/13.

[6] ST/SGB/2000/8.

6. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to present proposals to implement the provisions of resolution 56/242 within the resources specified in resolution 56/254 for consideration and action during the second part of the fifty-sixth session;

7. *Decides* to consider these matters further in the context of the first performance report at the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Draft resolution III
Documentation availability in six languages on the United Nations web site

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the simultaneous availability of parliamentary documentation in electronic form in the six official languages on the United Nations web site,[7]

Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the simultaneous availability of parliamentary documentation in electronic form in the six official languages on the United Nations web site.[7]

Draft resolution IV
Review of public information activities in the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the review of public information activities in the United Nations Secretariat outside the Department of Public Information,[8]

1. *Notes* the report of the Secretary-General on the review of public information activities in the United Nations Secretariat outside the Department of Public Information,[8] and looks forward to the submission to the relevant intergovernmental bodies of the comprehensive review referred to in paragraph 150 of its resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001, along with the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee on Information and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

2. *Decides* that the comprehensive review referred to above should address also the language versions of publications issued outside the Department of Public Information.

[7] A/C.5/56/12.
[8] A/C.5/56/17.

Draft resolution V
Documents and publications of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

The General Assembly,

Having considered the note by the Secretariat on the languages used for the preparation of documents and publications of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,[9]

1. *Recalls* its resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001;

2. *Urges* the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to comply with all relevant provisions of resolution 44 (IV) of 28 April 1977, whereby the Commission decided, inter alia, that all documents to be submitted to the Commission should, as far as possible, be drafted in Arabic;

3. *Takes note* of the note by the Secretariat on the languages used for the preparation of documents and publications of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,[9] and looks forward to the report of the Secretary-General on the progress achieved in the production of documents and publications in Arabic requested in paragraph 124 of its resolution 56/253 for consideration at the fifty-seventh session.

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[9] A/C.5/56/19.